

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
February 3, 2006

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Man Pleads Guilty to Bank Fraud, Stealing U.S. Mail

Rock Island, IL - Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois, announced that Ralph Wesley Riley, a/k/a Thomas Dancik, age 54, of Spring Grove, Illinois, pleaded guilty today to a federal indictment charging him with 13 counts of bank fraud and one count of stealing U.S. mail. The guilty pleas were entered this afternoon before U.S. District Judge Joe Billy McDade at the U.S. Courthouse in Rock Island.

The indictment alleged that on or about July 21, 2004, Riley stole mail from a U.S. Postal Service collection box in Geneseo, Illinois, used stolen checks to create counterfeit personal checks – each of which was in the amount of \$3,000, and made them payable to legitimate holders of personal checking accounts in the Quad Cities area. The indictment further alleged that on 13 different occasions, at four different banks and two different credit unions, Riley either deposited the counterfeit checks or prepared to do so. For each transaction, Riley purported to deposit \$2,100 while receiving back \$900 in cash.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Geneseo Police Department, Moline Police Department and the United States Postal Inspection Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sara Darrow in the Rock Island Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of Illinois.

Sentencing for Riley is scheduled for May 5, 2006 in Rock Island, Illinois. The offense of bank fraud carries a maximum statutory penalty of 30 years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000; for the offense of stealing U.S. mail the penalty is a maximum of five years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. Riley may also be ordered to pay restitution.

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